



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Statement of condolence on the passing of Jerome Martin**

Edmonton, Alberta – It is with great sadness that the Book Publishers Association of Alberta (BPAA) acknowledges the passing of our dear friend and colleague, Jerome Martin. A long-time publisher and member of the BPAA, he will be deeply missed and fondly remembered by us all.

In 2020, Jerome was presented with the Lifetime Achievement in Publishing Award by the BPAA. We include the text from that presentation here, as it truly paints a picture of the phenomenal person Jerome was.

Our deepest condolences go out to Jerome’s family and friends. May the profoundly beautiful person whom he was and the amazing life he lived bring comfort, joy, and a smile to all who knew him.

### ***2020 Lifetime Achievement in Publishing Award Presentation***

*Jerome Martin is a true renaissance man; professional photographer, gifted storyteller, talented musician, and of course, accomplished publisher. His insatiable curiosity and open mind have made him a well-respected citizen of the world, his selfless dedication and love for people make him a valued colleague and friend.*

*Born in Maple Creek, Saskatchewan, on the edge of the Cypress Hills, Jerome Martin grew up on a farm near Golden Prairie. It was the town of Golden Prairie where he began his career as a documentary photographer at the age of thirteen when he volunteered to take photographs of the important buildings in town for a school project celebrating Saskatchewan's Jubilee. Many of these photographs, along with others taken on more recent visits to the town, appear in the 2007 book Golden Prairie, which Martin also authored and published.*

*After high school Jerome travelled to Vernon, B.C. for a brief stint with the armed forces, but soon returned to continue his studies earning a Master of Science from the University of*



*Saskatchewan and PhD in Animal Nutrition from the University of Alberta in Edmonton. While living and working in Edmonton he had the opportunity to study photography with the legendary Hubert Hohn through the Edmonton Art Gallery. Even though photography was not generally regarded as a medium of fine art at the time, Jerome's photographs were chosen to be featured in the gallery's first photography exhibition in 1974. Jerome believes that he remains the only Canadian to receive a PhD in Animal Nutrition and a Canada Council grant in photography in the same month.*

*Jerome spent several years teaching Communication in the Faculty of Agriculture and Forestry and working with the science and publishing sections of the Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta. From there, he joined Alberta Agriculture to travel Alberta, from 'Medicine Hat to Fort Vermillion', and as far as England and the Caribbean speaking to farmers in extension meetings and on radio and TV. Once, while with the provincial government, Martin was referred to as a 'civil servant.' He still bristles at that memory, saying he is 'no one's servant, and certainly not civil'.*

*Jerome came to publishing through his fondness for the Great Plains of North America. Recognizing a dearth of material about the Great Plains, he and his partner Merle founded their publishing house because, in Jerome's words, 'if no one writes about you, you don't exist'. When Jerome and Merle told their family that they were founding a publishing house, daughter Heidi admonished Jerome not to call it "something boring, like 'Martin Publishing'", and tossed out the name 'Spotted Cow' as they passed by a herd of them at the University of Alberta farm. With that, Spotted Cow Press was born.*

*Since its founding in 1990, Spotted Cow Press has been dedicated to publishing material about the Great Plains; history, poetry, memoir, and photography. In addition, it has also tackled titles which Jerome and Merle found interesting or compelling enough to publish anyway, including an internationally successful title on chicken production.*

*Known for the quality of the craft of writing and for holding the best events in the community, Spotted Cow Press is also recognized as an innovator in publishing. They were the first publisher in Alberta to produce an ebook; the first publisher in Alberta to offer all of its titles in electronic form; and the first company anywhere to publish a trade book exclusively as a print-on-demand title, organizing a simultaneous launch in two different cities using two revolutionary, for the time, print-on-demand systems.*



*Jerome has been a committed board member and dedicated volunteer of the Book Publishers Association of Alberta for many years. He has produced ‘Podcasts on Publishing’, a timeless trove of publishing wisdom, still shared today on the BPAA website. Jerome has always made available his expertise and judgment as a juror on many Alberta Book Publishing Awards juries. He always gives his best and is an inspiration to the literary world and all its denizens.*

*Known by his colleagues as a true innovator, being the first to Skype, first to get a smartphone, and first to join Twitter, Jerome is always seeking new ways to tell the story while understanding and respecting the traditions of the oldest storytellers. Today we honour Jerome Martin, not just for his body of work, but also his philosophy: “storytelling is the most effective way of understanding the world and communicating that understanding to others.”*

*Jerome is proud that he always published what he wanted and notes that “there are still things I intend to publish.”*

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